5.

A

LETTER,

to the

INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN AND PARISH

of

BRADFORD.

Occasioned by several Publications,

Which have lately appeared among them under the Signature of

TRIM.

BY

JOHN CROSSE, A. M.

Vicar of Bradford.

Who steals my purse, steals trash, 't is
Something, nothing, 't was mine; 't is his
And has been slave to thousands:
But he who filches from me my good name
Robs me of that, which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed. *Shakespear.*

The character of a clergyman is of great consequence to *him* and ought to be treated with as much respect and delicacy as either the bond or credit of a tradesman. *Trim.*

Printed for the Author,
and sold by
JOHN BAXTER, NEAR THE CHURCH,
BRADFORD.
Anno. 1791.

PREFACE.

Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo, et omnis
in hoc sum. *Hor. Ep.*

What right, what true, what fit we justly call,
Let this be all my care----for this is all.
Pope.

"*THERE is nothing,*" *says the excellent Addison,* "*that more betrays a base and ungenerous spirit, than the giving of secret stabs to a man's reputation. Lampoons and satires are like poisoned darts, which not only inflict a wound, but make it incurable. For this reason I am very much troubled when I see the talents of humor and*

ridicule in the possession of an ill-natured man. To such a one, there cannot be a greater gratification, than to stir up sorrow in the heart of a private person, to raise uneasiness among near relations, and to expose whole families to derision. The wound indeed is only imaginary; and yet how many amiable characters are there in the world, who would not rather lose half their fortunes, yea life itself than be set up as a mark of infamy and derision? But if reason cannot furnish us with an antidote against these envenomed darts, Religion can. Hearken to me, says God, ye that follow after righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings, for the moth shall eat them like a garment, and the

worm shall eat them up like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation. Joseph may be hated of his brethren, and Shimei may curse David; but the former by maintaining his integrity, and the latter by a hearty and unfeigned repentance procured the approbation of that Almighty Being, who frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish. *Under every cross or trial therefore it is our interest to look up to God: if we are blame-worthy, let us rectify our conduct; if otherwise, let us wait with patience the decision of that day when ranks will be properly adjusted, and precedency set right. Then shall the righteous man stand*

in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for. And they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit shall say within themselves, This was he whom we had some time in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We fools counted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!

A LETTER

TO

THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN AND PARISH

OF

BRADFORD.

My dear parishioners,

IT is with the greatest concern and uneasiness, that I have, for some time past been an eye witness to the many indecent and scandalous publications disseminated amongst you, with equal industry, by writers of opposite parties; nor should I have thought it worth while to notice any aspersions cast upon my character, by the author of the Critique, Remarks, &c. was I not apprehensive that a total

silence might, by some of you, be construed into a confession of actual guilt, and make such unfavorable impressions upon your minds as to prevent you from profiting by my public ministrations. Influenced, therefore, by these motives, and these alone, I purpose, in the following pages, to attempt a brief vindication of myself, from the principal charges which Mr. Baldwyn, in the excess of his candor and benevolence, has been pleased to bring against me. In doing this, I would hope to preserve a christian temper; and, notwithstanding the various provocations received, and the bad example before my eyes, to forbear invading the sanctuary of private life, or tearing open, with savage hands, those wounds which humanity, as well as religion, teaches us rather to bind up and heal. In one particular, indeed, it is necessary for me to crave your indulgence; viz. that I speak so frequently in the first person, and sometimes, perhaps, in a way of self-commendation; but if I am become a fool in glorying, my adversary has compelled me; and so far from wishing, as he insinuates, to conceal any part of my conduct, with respect to the organ business, from public observation, there is nothing I wish for more than to have it thoroughly and impartially canvassed.

To proceed then with my defence. And

first, Mr. Baldwyn accuses me of "deceiving the late worthy lecturer; and he grounds this charge on the supposition, that Mr. Butler would not have resigned the lectureship, had he not received from me every possible encouragement to believe, that I should give my vote to his successor in the school." In reply to this charge I affirm, that Mr. Butler never made any direct application to me in behalf of Mr. Baldwyn; nor did I ever make him any promises on that subject. He resigned merely to gratify the earnest solicitations of Mr. Baldwyn's friends; and had that gentleman's voice been equal to the church, and his religious sentiments such as I could conscientiously have approved of, the same interest would undoubtedly have secured him every favor it was in my power to confer. But Mr. Baldwyn says "I wished to succeed to the lectureship myself; and he calls this a most iniquitous design, and rejoices greatly to think he has had the good fortune to prevent it." Not to mention, that I never did offer myself to the trustees, as a candidate for the lectureship, nor ever intended it, provided I could meet with a gentleman properly qualified; I would seriously ask Mr. Baldwyn, why the design would have been more iniquitous in the vicar of Bradford than in the pious and amiable Burkitt, who was both vicar and lecturer of Dedham in Essex; or, than in the

Rev. Mr. Harrison, who is at present both vicar and lecturer of Rotherham in this county; or, even than in Mr. Baldwyn himself, who is the head master of Bradford school, and has, according to his own confession, one living, if not two, in Shropshire? The intention of the charitable donor was no doubt to make provision for an afternoon sermon; and is not the end of the charity equally answered, whether the sermon is preached by the vicar, or the curate, or the school-master?

But before I quit the lectureship, I shall say a word or two in reply to what Mr. Baldwyn has advanced respecting my treatment of Mr. Sturges; and I do this, the rather, because I have reason to believe the transaction has never been fully cleared up to that gentleman's friends. Mr. Baldwyn, after accusing me of deceiving the late worthy lecturer, and disappointing the *poor* master of his prize, adds, " but why, sir, did you not appoint the deliberate object of your choice? Why, after bringing Mr. Sturges to Bradford, and giving him a view of the promised land, did you not suffer him to take possession, and to participate of the milk and honey it produces? Why was he, after many promises, turned adrift, and left to lament the insincerity of his friend? Mr. William Atkinson, it seems, stepped in, in the last act of this comedy; and just as Mr. Sturges

was about to embrace the fair object of his wishes, snatched her from his arms and carried her off in triumph." But why should Mr. Baldwyn thus endeavor to throw the blame of Mr. Sturges's not succeeding to the lectureship upon me? could he not in the midst of all these interrogatories recollect, that the vicar of Bradford had no power either to appoint a lecturer, or promise any gentleman that office, without the concurrence of his colleagues in the trust? I promised Mr. Sturges to do every thing in my power to procure him the lectureship; and this I did; and had the vicar of Halifax seconded my views, he would have been elected, even before Mr. Atkinson, who, by mere accident, heard of the vacancy, offered himself a candidate.* That he, viz. Mr. Atkinson, stepped in, in the last act of the business is certain, not indeed as Mr. Baldwyn says, just as Mr. Sturges was about to embrace the fair object of his wishes (for the vicar of

* About twelve months before Mr. Butler resigned the lectureship, I met Mr. Atkinson, in the street, at Leeds, and among other things, asked him, as far as I recollect, if, in case the lectureship should become vacant, and the trustees not agree in their choice of a new lecturer, he could make interest with the master and fellows of Peter-house, in Cambridge? But the conversation was so cursory, that I thought little more about it; and, in truth, I did not conceive the lectureship, an object worthy Mr. Atkinson's notice.

Halifax had *absolutely forbid the banns*, and another candidate, the Rev. Mr. Coates, had been brought forward); but near the expiration of the time allowed the trustees, by the Founder, to make their choice; and had not Mr. Busfield prevailed with Dr. Wood to favor Mr. Atkinson with his vote, the appointment would, in a few days, have devolved on the master and fellows of Peter-house, in Cambridge.

Again, Mr. Baldwyn charges me with being "guilty of simony." Now simony is a corrupt and unlawful contract made to have a person presented to a rectory or vicarage of any church, which is prohibited by 31. Eliz. chap. 6. whereby it is enacted, "that if any person, for any sum of money, reward, gift, profit or benefit, or by reason of any promise, agreement, grant, bond, covenant, or other assurance for any sum of money, reward, &c. shall present or collate any person to any benefice with cure, or give or bestow the same in respect of any such corrupt cause, or consideration, every such presentation shall be utterly void; and the crown, in such case, may present for that time." Here then is a fair opportunity for Mr. Baldwyn to produce his witness, and push forward to conviction; and, should he succeed, it is not impossible but that the minister, especially when acquainted with his abilities, may reward him with the void presentation;

and this will at once rid him of his bitter persecutor, as he is pleased to term me, and make him ample amends for the loss of the lectureship.

Thirdly, Mr. Baldwyn charges me with "breaking the covenant entered into, with the country gentlemen; and departing from the most solemn promises, made to them individually, and collectively." As this charge involves in it the whole of the organ business, it may be necessary to give you a short detail of circumstances relating to that matter, from the beginning. And first, it must be acknowledged by every one who has the least ear for music, or who considers psalmody as an essential part of public worship, that an organ was much wanted in the church of Bradford. The only question was, how it could be brought about; who would undertake to combat so many different opinions; and reconcile so many jarring interests? Mr. Kennett, supported by the principal gentlemen in the parish, made the attempt, and failed; but, as Shakespear observes,

----There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of life is bound in shallows.

The attempt, as you know, was made a second time, and succeeded, even beyond my most sanguine expectations. In a few weeks, five hundred pounds was subscribed; the organ was contract-

ed for; and nothing but harmony seemed to reign among us.

And now it occurred to me, that, as the church was too small for the congregation, some addition might probably be made to the fund, intended for the maintenance of an organist, by building a gallery. But here also, many obstacles were to be surmounted; and, it is not easy to conceive the difficulty I had to procure the consent, and quiet the minds of some individuals. At length, however, matters were accomodated, the galleries were built; the pews were disposed of, without partiality or favor; and unanimity still prevailed. The last undertaking I engaged in for the public service, was the oratorio. Here I had neither employers or associates; and therefore, could not, with any propriety, be compared either to a book-keeper or door-keeper; I ran all hazards, and, had the plan failed (and it certainly would, had I, agreeable to the advice of some gentlemen, procured singers of the first abilities, and a suitable band of music), perhaps Mr. Baldwyn would not have been as ready to have promoted a subscription to indemnify me, as he has been to invent falsehoods to injure me. But christianity teaches us to love our enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and the patriot, who acts on any other principles, deserves to be disappointed. To return, the ora-

torio left us, after all deductions, near sixty pounds; and a handsome fund* being now rais-

* Mr. Baldwyn, having brought me in debtor to the public above seven hundred pounds, introduces a long note, to acquaint the reader with the various shifts, doubles, and redoubles, practised by me, in order to avoid parting with the precious treasure. And first he says, "I meant to keep it myself, and alledged as a reason, that I had bought the vicarage too dear, and had nothing else to live upon. Secondly, finding this would not go down with the parish, I gave out that I should only keep it during my life, and would bequeath it to my successor: but enquiry being made whether I had made a will, and it being found that I had not, the alarm still continued: that then, thirdly, I gave out that it should be lodged in the hands of the chancellor, but on further consideration I declined this, for fear the chancellor would not let it come back again. In the mean time the country gentlemen, continuing to press hard upon me, I agreed, after some resistance, to deliver up the money into their hands; the next day I altered my mind, and determined, at all events, to keep it. However, a few months after, without consulting any body, I purchased a farm with the money, appointed trustees from among the inferior tradesmen of the town (not *one gentleman* being among them) and manage the rents and profits just as I please." Mr. Baldwyn begs pardon of the reader for troubling him with this long note; but, in my humble opinion, he has much greater reason to beg pardon, I will not say of me, for uttering so many false and malicious invectives, but of Almighty God, who declares that all liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with brimstone and fire. That I was a good deal perplexed how to dispose of the money, so that it might be a permanent fund to provide for the maintenance of an organist, is strictly

ed for the maintenance of an organist, there arose a dispute who should have the appointment. I, as vicar, naturally wished to preserve the rights of the church, and secure to my successors the choice of an officer, who was, in future, to perform a part in the public worship. The gentlemen, on the other hand, wished to have the choice vested in themselves; perhaps, out of fear, lest the vicar should abuse the trust reposed in him, and obtrude upon the congregation a person disqualified for the office. The motives, therefore, on both sides, appeared to be commendable; and I flatter myself, the method which has been

true; but that I never had the least intention of appropriating any part of it to my own use, Mrs. Crosse and others will testify, who know, that immediately on the receipt of the money, I added a codicil to my will (notwithstanding what Mr. Baldwyn says to the contrary) and directed my executrix, to pay the said money into the hands of the new vicar and churchwardens, to be disposed of, agreeable to the direction of a vestry meeting, called for that purpose: and I mentioned, in the said codicil, how the money came into my hands. And further, it is well known, that I used my best endeavors, from the beginning, to meet with an estate which might suit the purpose; and after I had actually purchased land, and settled it in perpetuity for the maintenance of an organist, (being aware, that, by the Mortmain act, no deed of this kind would be valid in law, unless executed twelve months before the death of the donor or granter) the codicil, above mentioned, remained unaltered, until such time as every thing was legally secured.

adopted, is well calculated to reconcile the difference. The vicar has the appointment; but the parish may, at any time, prevent an improper use of this power, and oblige him to remove a person who is generally disliked. And thus, having prepared the way, I come to refute the charge itself; and the better to do this, shall lay before you the following extract from Mr. Baldwyn's last pamphlet.

"Mr. Crosse's proposals to the gentlemen *appointed at the vestry meeting* to confirm and settle with him the plan of providing and securing a salary, and appointing an organist for the church of Bradford, are as follows; which, if approved of, are desired to be signed by them, as he has done.

1. "That the subscription to the organ, or as much of it as can be got, shall be paid to Mr. Crosse.

2. "That the said Mr. Crosse shall pay into the hands of the governors of Bradford school the clear sum of five hundred pounds to be placed out at interest, or applied in such manner as *they* shall direct, for a salary for the organist; and also, to allot such seats or pews in the old and north galleries as are unsold to the same purpose, and which are let for the sum of five pounds per annum.

3. "That an organist shall be chosen by a majority of the said governors, &c. &c."

You will observe, Mr. Baldwyn calls these *my* proposals; whereas, I defy him to produce any such paper in my hand writing, or with my name to it. I did indeed promise and agree, at the Sun, to pay into the hands of the governors of Bradford school, the clear sum of five hundred pounds, and that an organist should be chosen by a majority of the said governors; but it was with this express proviso, that they should, on their parts, covenant and agree to remove the said organist, whenever the vicars of Bradford, for the time being, should conceive there was a cause. A good deal was said on this head; the gentlemen wanted me to add, "provided the cause was just and reasonable;" but I still insisted upon it, that the justice and reasonableness of the cause should rest with the vicar; and thus we parted that night. The next day one of the gentlemen waited upon me at the vicarage, and pressed me very much to sign a paper, containing proposals similar to those above-mentioned; but this I peremptorily refused, and assigned as a reason, that there was not the least reference in them to the principal point in dispute, viz. the removal of the organist, on a complaint lodged against him, either by the vicar or the parish; and I am happy to think that my conduct,

in this particular, has since met with your general approbation.

Again, I deny having departed from any solemn promises, made to the gentlemen, individually or collectively; and I know but of two circumstances which can furnish Mr. Baldwyn with the least pretence for advancing such a charge. When I went about to collect the organ subscription, one gentleman asked me, if I did not mean to consult the subscribers respecting the disposal of the surplus? I replied, certainly. No surplus however remains of the subscription to the organ; for the money received on this account (as may be seen in the parish book, where every subscriber's name is entered, with the sum subscribed) was not sufficient to pay for the instrument, with other expences incident thereto; and, as to the money, arising from the sale of the pews and the oratorio, nothing was said about it. The other circumstance, which might seem to authorize this charge, relates to the manner in which the faculties were procured. Mr. Baldwyn says "I promised to *apply* for these in the names of the principal subscribers, as well as my own; and yet notwithstanding this declaration, in the face of the parish, and what is more to a pious man, in the house of God, I purposely omitted the names of such subscribers, and procured a faculty solely in my own

name." That I procured the faculty, at last, in my own name alone is true; but, not without giving the parish legal notice of my intentions; nor was this contrary to any promise I had made. In all public transactions the end is principally to be considered; and I appeal to you all, if the end is not as effectually obtained, as if every gentleman and subscriber in the parish had been joined with myself in the faculty. Have not the pews been disposed of without partiality or favor? Has not every farthing of the money been brought to account? and what is more, has not every step I have taken received the approbation of the subscribers in general? Where then is there any just grounds for accusing me with a breach of promise in this business? or why does Mr. Baldwyn talk "of appointing proper trustees, with proper powers, and then the remaining subscriptions will be paid with the same readiness and liberality with which they were subscribed?" Surely, in all collective bodies a majority must direct the whole; and, as a majority of the subscribers, as well as the parish at large, assembled in vestry, have approved of the trust already appointed, and of the manner in which the money has been laid out and settled, is not every subscriber as much bound in *honor* to abide by such decision, with respect to any matter or

thing relating to the organ, as he would in *law* to pay his quota to any parish rate?

But Mr. Baldwyn, speaking still with an eye to the proposals, says, "and what return, sir, did you make the gentlemen for the indulgence and liberality with which you was treated? You observed that part of the agreement which suited your own selfish purpose, of producing only five hundred pounds; laid out this money without consulting them; and then, contrary to the proposal you had assented to, appointed trustees, for the management of it, out of the tradesmen of the town." That the gentlemen of the parish have treated me with unmerited indulgence and liberality I shall ever gratefully acknowledge; and it is the first wish of my heart to make a suitable return, on every proper occasion: but, that I acted contrary to the proposals I had assented to, or, that I only observed that part of the agreement which suited my own selfish purpose, is what I absolutely deny.

As to the proposals, I have already shewn, that they never received my sanction, and how could it suit my own selfish purpose, to give up near an hundred pounds,* and hazard the dis-

* According to the proposals, the subscription to the organ, unpaid, together with all the money that remained over and above the five hundred pounds from the sale of the pews

pleasure of some of the principal families in the town and neighborhood? Separate from what I considered as the rights of the church, of what advantage was it to me, whether the five hundred pounds had been deposited in the hands of the gentlemen, or laid out in the purchase of land? yes, Mr. Baldwyn replies, "you have wisely reserved for yourself the power of letting the lands; and may, without being accountable to any tribunal upon earth, employ the produce, either in paying your curate, or in building a tabernacle." This is indeed witty, and may raise a smile in the countenance of the gay and thoughtless, but as opposite to the truth as light to darkness. The deed of settlement expressly limits the uses of the rents and profits of the land, viz. "to and for the sole use of such an organist as he the said John Crosse, and his successors, the vicars of Bradford, shall, from time to time, nominate and appoint." And another clause is added "impowering the two churchwardens for the town of Bradford to receive and take the rents and profits of the land, in *case* the vicar shall not remove the organist, on a complaint lodged against him by a majority of the inhabitants assembled in vestry."

and the oratorio, was to be given up to the vicar, to indemnify him, in some measure, for the great expences he had been at, in repairing the vicarage.

And as I have mentioned the organist, it may be proper to clear up some very capital blunders, which Mr. Baldwyn has run into, with respect to the salary belonging to that office. "Soon after the land was purchased (says the author of the Critique, Remarks &c.) the vicar declared at a parish meeting, that it was let for twenty five pounds per annum; and that this sum would be paid annually to the organist, yet it is well known, that previous to this declaration, he had proposed to the organist, to take the sum of fifteen pounds, for five years, alledging, that he could not spare him more, on account of the expences he had been at in repairing the vicarage."

In the first place, the land was never let for more than twenty one pounds per annum, and in the next place, the organist has certified under his own hand,* that I never made any such proposal to him. I said, indeed, at the vestry meeting, held March nineteenth, 1788; that the vicar could not, at present, make any addition to

* I William Speight, organist of Bradford, do hereby declare, that Mr. Crosse never mentioned a word to me, about fixing the salary at fifteen pounds per annum, for five years. On the contrary, Mr. Crosse intimated, a few months ago, that there was now a probability of the place being much better.

March 20th, 1788. *William Speight.*

the organist's salary, not, as Mr. Baldwyn affirms, on account of the expences he had been at in repairing the vicarage; but, on account of some additional building, wanted to complete the premises just purchased; and because, notwithstanding the land was paid for at Christmas, no rent was received till the November following. And pray, where was the injustice of all this? or how can Mr. Baldwyn, with the least regard to truth, call the organist a *poor man*, and say, that he has no better support for a wife and family than fifteen, or twenty five pounds, per annum? What, can he be ignorant, that every organist, except such as are employed in cathedrals, depends, principally, for his support on teaching music? and does he not know, that the present organist of Bradford, can, if he is so disposed, acquire by this means, an income equal to what Mr. Baldwyn receives for teaching the classics, and with nearly the same ease? But, supposing the organist had no more than fifteen, or twenty five pounds per annum, for the support of himself and his family; what is that to me? he receives every farthing, the different funds, intended for his maintenance, have produced: and you must acknowledge, they have produced a great deal more than could be reasonably expected.

When I first set about the organ subscription, it was asserted, by some of the most intelli-

gent persons in the parish, that I should never raise two hundred pounds; and, when I proposed the building of galleries, it was suggested, who will buy the seats? and, when I talked of an oratorio, the question was, who would undertake to satisfy the performers? But now success has attended every undertaking, and I have collected and expended between twelve and thirteen hundred pounds, in and about the church, the difficulties and obstructions are entirely forgotten, and I am accused of withholding from the organist a considerable sum, and appropriating the interest of the same towards the maintenance of myself and Mrs. Crosse. But censure is the tax a man must expect to pay to the public for being eminent or useful. It is a folly to think of escaping it, and a weakness to be affected with it. The best characters of antient, or modern times, have passed through this fiery persecution; and there is no defence against reproach but obscurity or indolence. Nevertheless, to remove every stumbling block out of the way of a weak brother, and to convince Mr. Baldwyn, if possible, that none of the public money remains in my hands, I have annexed the outline of my accounts, delivered in by me and examined at the meeting held March 19th 1790, and shall answer two or three objections which Mr. Baldwyn has made respecting them.

AN

ACCOUNT OF MONEY,

received

BY THE REV. JOHN CROSSE.

	£.	s.	d.
By benefactions to the organ,	432	13	6
* By sale of the pews,	742	2	0
By the oratorio, clear of all expences,	56	10	0
	£1231	5	6

* In the parish books are entered the names of every person, who purchased seats or pews in the new galleries, together with the sum paid for the same.

AN

ACCOUNT OF MONEY,

paid

BY THE REV. JOHN CROSSE.

To Mr. Donaldson for the organ,	335	0	0
To various expences relating thereto,	105	13	1
To building the galleries, &c.	177	6	6
To procuring the faculties,	22	13	6
To purchasing seats,	40	15	0
To a new cover for the pulpit, &c.	23	10	0
To several small bills,	15	16	0
	720	14	1
Deposited in the Leeds bank, and for which I only received 2½ per cent,	500	0	0
	£1220	14	1
Balance in the church-wardens hands,	10	11	5

the interest of which has been hitherto paid to the blower,

And now I shall answer two or three objections which Mr. Baldwyn has made to my accounts* in general, though, in fact, they cannot have any weight with persons of discernment and candor.

And first, he says, "upon enquiry it was found that on the evening preceding the meeting, held March 19th, 1788, and not before they were delivered in, although I had positively told the attorney, who waited upon me from the gentlemen, that they had been, for some time, in the hands of the church-wardens." I certainly did inform the attorney, who waited upon me from the gentlemen, that my accounts had been, for some time, entered in the parish book; and that the said book was in the hands of the church-wardens: and this is as undoubted a truth, as that Mr. Baldwyn is head-master of Bradford school: and the few articles entered the evening preceding the meeting, were of so trifling a nature as not at all to affect the general account; and had been paid for since the first entry.

Secondly Mr. Baldwyn says, "that the meeting was fixed by design in the assize week;

* The gentlemen, who executed the different conveyances &c. were so obliging as to give both their labor and advice, without fee or reward: And, but for this act of benevolence, with others of a like nature, the disbursements would have exceeded the receipts.

because it was known that some gentlemen, who had taken an active part in this business, would necessarily be absent." If my asseveration is of any weight, I declare positively, that the assize week was never in my mind; and I know but of one gentleman, who was prevented from attending the meeting, owing to this circumstance.

But lastly, Mr. Baldwyn says, " that when the day arrived, as it was understood, that the neighboring gentlemen would attend, the accounts were hastily examined, and *wisely* approved of before they arrived." You will observe Mr. B. acknowledges " the accounts were examined, and *wisely* approved of before the country gentlemen arrived." And supposing this true; of what consequence was the absence of *three* individuals, when the majority in my favor was so very considerable? But it is a downright falsehood: and all of you, who attended the meeting, know full well, that the gentlemen, were not only present when the accounts were examined, but said a great deal on the occasion: and the question, viz. " do these accounts appear to you to be fair and just, and do you approve of the manner in which the vicar has laid out the money, and settled the appointment of the organist, agreeable to the deed just read?" was not put 'till towards the conclusion of the meeting, which lasted near three hours. And it is also necessary to remind you,

that the parish was not taken by surprize; notice was given of the meeting on two several Sundays; and the occasion of it fully and clearly ascertained. And with respect to the accounts themselves, there was but one article for which I could not produce legal vouchers, viz. the oratorio. Here indeed the parish were satisfied with my simple declaration; and though Mr. Baldwyn is pleased to consider this their acquiescence as exceedingly culpable, yet had he himself been present at the meeting, and cross-examined me for an hour together, and that with all the ingenuity of the most eminent council at the bar, what other proof could he have acquired? or what remedy could he find in law or equity? In all matters of trust we must depend upon the honor and honesty of the persons employed: I gave in the clear profits of the oratorio* at fifty six pounds ten shillings, and

* If the gentleman, who gave Mr. Baldwyn his information respecting the money taken at the oratorio, will give himself the trouble to call at the vicarage, he shall receive the most satisfactory and convincing evidence of his mistake: And particularly, with regard to the number of tickets disposed of, and the expences attending the performance. As to what Mr. Baldwyn says about the singers not having money enough to carry them to their respective settlements, or even to buy a dinner, it is a malicious invective. I paid all the performers, both vocal and instrumental, who were *engaged*, their full de-

this, to the very best of my knowledge, was the whole of what I received; and I have the vanity to think, that every unprejudiced bystander, who was acquainted with the confusion that prevailed at the doors, and the number of auditors, who, by various manœuvers, gained admittance into the church without tickets, will be surprized to hear they amounted to so much. But according to the old proverb, "there are none so blind as those who will not see." And now having briefly considered the *principal* charges which Mr. Baldwyn, in his several publications, has repeatedly brought against me, I shall just notice a few lesser matters, and which, in reality, would not be worth noticing, any further than as they tend to confute that gentleman's boasted adherence to candor and benevolence, and to prove, that not a single fact which he has related concerning me is strictly true, or even the most trivial anecdote free from misrepresentation.

And to begin with the anecdote, or story of the Prussian princess. This has turned out a very lucrative hint for Mr. Baldwyn, and has served him, at different times, to eke out a two shil-

mands, except Miss Wrigley, and afterwards I satisfied her also; and if this is not the truth, let them stand forth and attest the contrary, and justice shall be done them to the very utmost.

ling, or half-crown pamphlet; for as a *renowned* bard tells us,

> Some write for fame, and some for spite,
> And some to get a penny by 't.

But though Mr. Baldwyn is pleased to declare in the *most solemn manner*, that he received this anecdote from me, both in the form and substance in which he has presented it to the public; yet I must take the liberty flatly to contradict him, and to assure the public, that they have been grossly deceived. The anecdote, is not only mutilated, but the principal feature in it entirely changed. The lady I mentioned to him, was not *Ann Charlotte Amelia*, youngest sister of the late King of Prussia, the same, who, *as Mr. Baldwyn affirms*, had distinguished herself by an amour with Baron Trenck, but the first consort of the present monarch: a lady well known at Berlin in the year 1767, or thereabouts, for the great levity of her manners, and imprudent carriage towards the other sex; and who, before I left the country, was openly and solemnly divorced from her august spouse, and sentenced to pass the remainder of her days in a Prussian fortress; not for entering into a conversation with the vicar of Bradford, but for crim. con. with an officer in the army. But a hint to the wise is enough; and Mr. Baldwyn did not want penetration to

discover, that, with a few alterations and additions, this anecdote would furnish him with a precious opportunity of contrasting his bitter persecutor with Baron Trenck of famous memory; of charging him with a libel on the illustrious house of Brandenburg; of introducing the vessel lying off Scarbro', with other ludicrous circumstances, all ingeniously calculated to expose the object of his resentment, and increase his own laurels. "But the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment." The Prussian ambassador, it is to be hoped, after the above intelligence, will discern *who is the real libeller*, and use his utmost endeavors to bring the schoolmaster to justice: and I believe some of you will think, that the solitary prison of Baron Trenck is no improper place for the man, who can thus cast about him firebrands, arrows, and death, and say, am I not in sport.

Another story noticed by Mr. Baldwyn, no doubt with the same laudable design as the former, is the manner in which, as he says, "the money was paid to Mr. Sinclair for the living; and the prodigious anxiety I discovered for the safety of the precious and much loved mammon in its short passage from Bradford to York." But here again our remarker has got upon the wrong scent. The money, it is well known, was not paid to Mr. Sinclair; nor was that gentleman

present when it was paid; nor was it conveyed from *Bradford* to York; nor was it deposited in the place Mr. Baldwyn mentions: and yet, provided it had been so, does it follow that I excluded morality from my creed, or preferred wealth to virtue? I conceive not: and if Mr. Baldwyn can reason no better, he has studied logic seven years to very little purpose. But it has been the manner of satirists, poets, and philosophers, in every age and clime, to rail at money, as the grand corrupter of the world, the bane of virtue, and the pest of society; and one celebrated writer, in particular, gravely exhorts his countrymen, in order to banish all vice at once, to "throw all their money into the sea." But is not all this mere declamation? for let the world be as corrupt as it will, gold and silver is not to blame. The *love* of money, we know, is the root of all evil: but not the thing itself. In the hands of a real christian it becomes food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked. It may be as eyes to the blind, feet to the lame; yea, a lifter up from the gates of death. Seeing then all these excellent benefits may be derived from the right use of money, why should Mr. Baldwyn ridicule any person for taking every necessary precaution to secure it from the depredations of thieves and sharpers? There are two characters in life, equally opposite to the spirit

and temper of the gospel; the miser and the spendthrift: to avoid these extremes, I earnestly recommend to your notice the following short rules; "get all you can honestly, save all you can decently, and give all you can prudently." In so doing you will be faithful and wise stewards; and your riches, instead of being a witness against you at the last day, and eating up your flesh as it were fire, will be a witness of your faith in Jesus, and procure you friends, the orphan, the widow, the oppressed, the outcast, who shall welcome you into everlasting habitations. But then, above all things, attend to the first direction; what you get, get honestly: and this precept condemns "all such as by forging of deeds, or suborning of witnesses, have got possession of other men's estates. All that by robbing upon the high-way, breaking open of houses, picking of pockets, or by any other kind of theft, have stolen any thing from their neighbour. All apprentices and servants that have neglected their master's business, embezzled his goods, purloined his money, and converted any part of his estate or property, however small and trifling, to their own use. All that by false weights, false measures, or false pretences, have imposed upon their customers, so as to give them either less, or not so good as they agreed for. All that industriously conceal the faults or defects of the

wares they sell, and so make the buyer pay more than what the commodity is really worth, according to the market price. All that by smuggling their goods, forswearing themselves, or bribing of servants, withhold from the king any part of his customs, or other revenues, which the laws of God, and the land, have given him a just right and title to. All that by slandering or false accusing of their neighbours, have taken from them what they had, or hindered them from getting what they lawfully might. In short, all that have been either principles or accessaries in wronging any man of any thing, howsoever it was done, are guilty of dishonesty, and without making *restitution* to the utmost of their power, cannot possibly hope to partake of the gospel salvation;" for Jesus Christ came to save us from our sins, not in them.*

* The best casuists in divinity, have considered it as indispensably necessary to salvation, to make full restitution to the person wronged, or his heirs, principal and interest: In case these cannot be found, then to give the money to some pious use, not as an act of charity, but as an act of justice: where the offender is not able to do this, he must do all he can, and ask the party, injured, forgiveness on account of the deficiency. This kind of doctrine, I know, will not be very acceptable to the generality of men, but I believe it to be perfectly agreeable to the word of God; and our saviour says, "if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maim-

But to proceed: "When the Rev. William Atkinson applied to the chancellor for the vicarage of Bingley, his lordship, says Mr. Baldwyn, took notice of his being a methodist, which this gentleman solemnly denied; and to strengthen his denial, applied to his Rev. friend, the vicar of Bradford, for a certificate setting forth that there was no grounds for such a suspicion; and Mr. Baldwyn adds, that the vicar, without loss of time, sent him a declaration, signed by himself and others, the preamble of which was to this purport: "whereas certain uncharitable and ill disposed persons, to injure the character of the Rev. William Atkinson, have maliciously propagated a report that he belongs to the sect called the methodists &c." But what dependance can be placed upon any thing which proceedeth from the pen of this writer, when it is notorious, that Mr. Atkinson never applied to me for any certificate or testimonial whatever; nor did I set my name to any such instrument: and what will Mr. Baldwyn's divine master, Jesus Christ, say to him, in the great day of final retribution, for

ed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:" and by hand here he certainly means any sin which we find ourselves as unwilling to part with as the most useful member of the body.

thus forging and propagating a downright falsehood, and that in order, as he imagined, to pour contempt and infamy on two of his brethren in the ministry? Is this acting like a man of honor, or a christian? Is this presenting you with polished satire, decent language, and chearful railery? If so, then I will say with good old Jacob, when speaking of the cruelty of his two sons, Simeon and Levi; "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honor be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self will they digged down a wall." It is true, Mr. Baldwyn has not imbrued his hands in human blood; but the inspired penman informs us, that he who hateth his brother is a *murderer*. And I appeal to you, my dear parishioners, if the many severe and cutting reflections which are every where to be met with in that gentleman's writings do not strongly savor of vindictive hatred? Irony, or ridicule may be lawful and necessary on some occasions, as we learn from the scriptures themselves; but when we perceive that an author's main design is not so much to expose the vice, as the person of his rival, we naturally conclude that he is not actuated by the best of motives; and though we may applaud his wit, we cannot but detest his principles. But Mr. Baldwyn perhaps may retort upon me and say, "physician heal thyself." If you thus de-

claim against scandal and falsehood, why do *you* patronize and encourage those writers, who are in this respect equally culpable with the author of the Critique, Remarks, &c. If Mr. Baldwyn could prove that I have, directly or indirectly, thus acted, it would be a blow at the root, and must render the whole contents of this letter perfectly beneath your notice; but the insinuation is altogether groundless; and I challenge the most strict observer of my conduct, private or public, to produce a single instance which might authorize such a supposition. And yet how can I possibly hope to escape the censures of this critic? When I publicly requested Everberus to drop his intended review, because I apprehended his plan was, not so much to vindicate my character, as to blacken and vilify that of my opponent, I am accused of duplicity, and a reason assigned which I protest never entered my head, viz. lest if Everberus had proceeded with his work, my conduct would again have met the public eye: on the contrary, if any writer is determined to pursue his own inclination, and interest, and to deal as largely in scandal and defamation as the head master of the grammar school himself, I am immediately accused, either as being the very person, or if not, at least his

patron and encourager.* In the midst however of this tremendous battery it is no small consolation to reflect, that a mind, conscious of its own integrity, will prove like a brazen wall, and, in the end, cause the whole fire to recoil on the head of the assailant. Gracious God! may it produce the happy effect described by the poet!

So artists melt the sullen ore of lead,
By heaping coals of fire upon its head:
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And pure from dross the silver runs below.

Again, I leave you to judge, my dear parishioners, for what charitable purpose Mr. Baldwyn has related the following story?

"Soon after the Rev. John Crosse came to the vicarage, he gave out that he would divide the house into cottages, would occupy one himself, and let the others. That he actually let

* Mr. Baldwyn, in his Critique, positively affirms, that I was the writer of the letters which appeared some time since in the Leeds Intelligencer, under the signatures of Observer and Anti-Trim, and has bestowed wonderful pains in favoring the public with his learned comments on these productions; but, like many other knights of the quill, he has been abusing a phantom of his own creation. I never wrote a single line in the Leeds Intelligencer, or in any other paper, to which I did not affix my name, and it would be more for the honor of literature if every writer was obliged to do so too.

one to a poor family in the town; but, upon the representation of some of the inhabitants, who observed that the vicars of Bradford had always lived in a house, that his fortune would enable him to do it, and that he would bring everlasting disgrace upon himself by converting the vicarage into cottages, the design was dropped." If the design was dropped, why then does Mr. Baldwyn, who professes to be a friend to candor and benevolence, take any notice of it? Candor and benevolence surely prompts us, rather to draw a veil of oblivion over the infirmities of our neighbour, than needlessly expose them. But anecdotes of this kind remind one of the story of the three crows.*

The rise and progress of a Lie

* Two honest tradesmen meeting in the Strand,
One took the other briskly by the hand,
Hark ye; said he, 't is an odd story this
About the crows!----I do n't know what it is,
Replied his friend----No! I 'm surpriz'd at that,
Where I come from it is the common chat:
But you shall hear; an odd affair indeed!
And, that it happen'd, they are all agreed:
Not to detain you from a thing so strange,
A gentleman that lives not far from 'Change,
This week, in short, as all the alley knows,
Taking a puke, has thrown up three black crows.
Impossible----nay but it 's really true;
I have it from good hands, and so may you----
From whose, I pray?----so having nam'd the man,
Straight to enquire his curious comrade ran,

Nothing more was intended than to fit up a room, or two, at one end of the house, for the reception of a married man (without children) to look after the glebe, which at that time, I meant to occupy myself; and the design was dropped, not

Sir, did you tell----relating the affair----
Yes sir I did; and if its worth your care,
Ask Mr. such a one, he told it me,----
But by the bye, 't was two black crows, not three.
Resolv d to trace so wond'rous an event,
Whip, to the third, the virtuoso went.
Sir,----and so forth----why yes; the thing is fact,
Tho' in regard to number not exact;
It was not two black crows, 't was only *one*,
The truth of that you may depend upon.
The gentleman himself told me the case----
Where may I find him?----why in such place.
Away goes he, and having found him out,
Sir, be so good as to resolve a doubt----
Then to his last informant he referr'd,
And begg'd to know, if *true* what he had heard;
Did you, sir, throw up a black crow?----Not I----
Bless me! how people propagate a lie!
Black crows have been thrown up *three*, *two*, and *one*;
And here, I find, all comes, at last, to *none!*
Did you say *nothing* of a crow at all?
Crow----crow----perhaps I might, now I recall
The matter over----and, pray sir, what was 't?
Why I was *horrid* sick, and at the last,
I did throw up, and told my neighbour so,
Something that was----as black sir, as a crow.

for the reasons which Mr. Baldwyn has suggested, but because, on further consideration, I concluded not to keep horses, for the present, and therefore should not want a man to look after them. It may be proper to acquaint Mr. Baldwyn, that the *poor* man appeared to be very well satisfied with what I gave him, as a compensation for his advanced rent. If he is not, let him apply to me, and the account shall be settled to his entire satisfaction.

But Mr. Baldwyn, has not yet done with the vicarage, for, unmindful of the very comfortable asylum he found here in the moment of his distress, no sooner is he provided for elsewhere, than like the wicked Edomites, he cries, down with it, down with it, even to the ground. "What is the vicarage to the parish? what interest or concern have they in a house, which like any other in the town, is disposed of and sold to the best bidder?" Not quite so fast, sir; it is true, the house must, according to the deed of settlement, become the property of the vicar for life; but, as it was never annexed to the living by act of parliament, neither the vicar or patron can be sued for dilapidations; and therefore, if the parish wish to have a vicar resident among them, as well as a schoolmaster, it is as much their interest to have the house kept up in decent repair, as it was that of their ancestors to purchase it: and

I would not have it forgotten, that for this laudable intent, viz. that the vicar of Bradford might not plead the necessity of non residence, because there was no vicarage house proper for his reception, the inhabitants in the year 1695 generously subscribed one hundred and fifty three pounds, to enable Mr. Pemberton to purchase the house wherein I now live, and which has ever since been called the vicarage-house: and in the year 1720 another subscription was entered into, to enable Mr. Kennett to repair and enlarge the same. Viewing the matter then in this light, you may possibly differ from Mr. Baldwyn, and think, that after expending near two hundred pounds upon the vicarage-house, so called, I was entitled to some assistance, provided it could be procured in an honorable manner. But, as the organ has cost above one hundred pounds more than was at first expected, I have relinquished every idea of this kind; and now it is my only wish, that the subscriptions unpaid, together with the surplus remaining in the hands of Messrs. Stead and Tetley, and the twenty four pounds expended about the pulpit, and which the parish ought in justice to repay, may be vested in the public funds, in the name of the vicar and the two church-wardens of the town of Bradford, and the interest appropriated towards the maintenance of the organist for ever:

and, if this is done, the salary will not be less than thirty pounds per annum; which, as I am informed, is equal to what the organist of Halifax receives. Be this however as it may, I have the satisfaction to reflect, that the principal object has been obtained; and according to Mr. Baldwyn's own confession, "in the space of three short years, I have performed exploits sufficient to signalize a reign of fifty." But it would be tedious and disagreeable to notice every little aspersion, which the author of the Critique, &c. has thrown out against me: and, I believe, enough has been said to convince you, that he has neither discovered the candor of the gentleman, or the charity of the christian, that he has advanced what he cannot fairly prove, and has been guilty of the very same offence* (viz. of spread-

* Mr. Baldwyn had certainly a right to criticise the Lecturer's poems, and to scrutinize my public conduct; yet he might have performed this work and labor of love without relating what was transacted in the *pantry* at Thorp-Arch, (provided the transaction had been true) or divulging the contents of a letter, addressed to another person, and which fell into his hands through inadvertence &c. &c. But he has done his worst; and I now say to him as *Lysander* to a vain fellow, who did greatly revile him "go to, go to, speak and write against me as much, and as often as thou wilt, and *leave out nothing*, if perchance by this means thou may'st discharge thee of those naughty things, with the which it seemeth thou art full laden." When

ing calumny and falsehood) which he so severely censures in his opponents. If he should condescend to write again, I could wish him to be more serious, it will neither injure his character, or his cause: and, though he has nothing formidable to dread from me, yet "this unwary ridicule may, sooner or later, bring him into scrapes and difficulties which no after wit can extricate him out of, and it may be no extravagant arithmetic to say, that for every ten jokes he has got an hundred enemies. But I shall take my leave of this gentleman for the present, and have only to add, that, if he is disposed to be civil, I could wish him, when opportunity serves, to favor the public with an essay on the following lines.

Set not the faults of other men in view,
But rather mind what thou thyself shouldst do;
For twenty errors of thy neighbor known,
Will tend but little to reform thy own.

And now, my dear parishioners, by way of expressing my gratitude for your general approbation of my conduct; and, also, indeed, to fulfill the important trust committed to me as your

Philip king of Macedon was evil spoken of by the chief rulers of the city of Athens, he did thank them heartily, because by them he was made better, both in his words and deeds: for I study, saith he, both by my sayings and doings to prove them liars.

spiritual guide, I shall conclude this address with briefly pointing out to you, in the best manner I am able, the certain and infallible road to that celestial city.

Where you shall learn th' exalted strains,
Which echo through the heav'nly plains,
And emulate, with joy unknown,
The glowing seraphs round the throne.

And, first, this in general is by Jesus Christ: he is the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the father, or to heaven, but by him, nor by him, without believing in him; for it is written he that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. But then our church teaches that this faith is not in the mouth and outward profession only, but it liveth and stirreth in the heart. It is not only to believe all the holy scriptures to be true, not only that the death of Christ is available for the redemption of the world, for the remission of sins, and reconciliation with God the father; but also that he hath made upon his cross a full and sufficient sacrifice for *thee*, a perfect cleansing of *thy sins*, so that thou mayst say with the apostle, he loved *thee*, and gave himself for *thee*.* And, moreover, true faith is ever fruitful in bringing

* See the homily on salvation.

forth good works. I am the vine, saith Christ, and ye are the branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, he bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. When the Jews asked of Christ what they should do to work good works: he answered, this is the work of God, to believe in him whom he sent: so that he called faith the work of God. And as soon as a man hath faith, anon he shall flourish in good works." And the apostle to the Romans evinces the same important truth. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And this hope maketh not ashamed, (is not a vain, empty, presumptuous dependance, like that of the hypocrite, formalist, or antinomian) because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, by the holy ghost which is given unto us. And the love of God cannot possibly exist where there is not the love of our neighbour: for into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter; nor dwell in the body that is subject to sin: for the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in. But the nature of this saving faith, together with the temper and situation of the persons, who are the sub-

jects of it, will more fully appear, if we attentively consider the different metaphors, which the inspired writers make use of, when speaking of this grace. In Matt. xi. 28. faith is represented by coming to Christ, *come unto me, saith the redeemer, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden,* (viz. with sin, to whom the remembrance of it is grievous, and the burden intolerable) *and I will give you rest.* And in John, i. 12. it is called a receiving of Christ. *To as many as received him,** *to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* And in Isaiah xxv. 4. faith is represented as a flying to Christ for refuge. *For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a REFUGE from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.* And the same metaphor is used by the apostle to the Hebrews. vi. 18. *that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God*

* This receiving of Christ implies these three things. 1. The assent of the understanding to that divine testimony which the scripture gives of Christ. 2. The consent of the will to submit to this Jesus as lord and king. 3. The affiance and trust of the heart in Christ alone for salvation; for faith is not a bare credence but a divine affiance, and such an affiance in Christ and reliance upon him, as is the parent and principle of obedience to him.

Burkett.

to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for REFUGE to lay hold upon the hope set before us. These words have a manifest allusion to the cities of refuge, which God appointed of old; that the slayer might flee thither, who had killed any person at unawares; and where he might be safe from the wrath of the pursuer and avenger of blood. Again, in Isaiah xlv. 22. faith is represented by looking. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.* And this passage is well expounded by our saviour, John iii. 14. *for as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,* (that the Israelites bitten by the fiery serpents might look to it and live) *even so must the son of man be lifted up* (viz. on the cross): *that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.* And lastly, faith is represented by *trusting* in Christ. *I know,* saith St. Paul, writing to Timothy, *whom I have believed, or TRUSTED, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day,* 2 Tim. i. 12. This act of faith enables the soul, in the midst of the greatest discouragements and difficulties, to press steadily forward in the path of duty. *The lord,* says David, *is my light and salvation, whom shall I fear? the lord is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid? though an host should encamp against me, my heart*

shall not fear: and though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in him.

But further, concerning this faith, whereby we are justified and accounted righteous before God, our church teaches, that no man can have it by nature, or human learning, but is utterly void of it, 'till the holy ghost give it him. Thus in the homily for Rogation week, "God give us grace (good people) to know these things, and to *feel* them in our hearts (viz. that all is of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ). This knowledge *and feeling* is not in ourselves, by ourselves it is not possible to come by it. Let us therefore meekly call upon that bountiful spirit, the holy ghost, which proceedeth from our father of mercy, and from our mediator Christ, that he would assist us, and inspire us with his presence, that in him we may be able to hear the goodness of God declared unto us to our salvation. For without his lively and secret inspiration, can we not once so much as speak the name of our mediator, as St. Paul plainly testifieth. No man can say that Jesus is the lord, but by the holy ghost." And in the order for the visitation of the sick, the minister beseeches "the almighty Lord to make the dying person know and *feel*, that there is none other name under heaven given to man, in whom, and through whom he may receive health and salvation, but

only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." And again, in the homily for Whitsunday. "It is the holy ghost, and no other thing, that doth quicken the minds of men, stirring up good and godly motions in their hearts, which are agreeable to the will and commandment of God, such as otherwise of their own crooked and perverse nature they should never have. Man of his own nature is fleshly and carnal, corrupt and naught, sinful and disobedient to God, without any spark of goodness in him, without any virtues or godly motion, only given to evil thoughts and evil deeds."

But, secondly, though you can do nothing in a way of merit, you can, and must do much in a way of means. *If any man will come after me*, says the redeemer, *let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

And, first, let him deny his PRIDE. And verily there is a vast deal of this root of bitterness in the heart of every child of Adam. Alas, what pains and tricks do we often practise to *cheat* for praise? We enquire after our faults and failings only to be told we have none; we degrade and vilify our best actions only to be chidden for so doing: we bestow our charity, and charge no one to speak of it, and yet hope by this means to have it more spread abroad: yea so false, so treacherous is the human heart,

that without great watchfulness and prayer, we shall become proud of our very humility; and in the contemplation of the gift forget the donor. But the most pernicious effect of this accursed principle is, that it prompts us to dispute the veracity of JEHOVAH; to quarrel with his dispensations, both of grace and providence; to extenuate the nature and number of our offences; and to slight and despise the only remedy that can prevent our final and eternal overthrow. reject then, I entreat you, every suggestion which might tend to foster and nourish this noxious weed. *It is the beginning of wisdom,* says Epictetus, *for a man to know his own weaknesses and infirmities:* and a greater than Epictetus says, *I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

Again, if any man will come after Christ he must deny his INTEREST. Religion is seldom the road to preferment. *If ye were of the world,* says the Redeemer, *the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* We read that among

the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Vital religion has, in every age, been branded with some opprobrious epithet; and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer a species of persecution. It was an objection as old as the days of Solomon respecting the righteous. "*He professeth to have the knowledge of God; and he calleth himself the child of the Lord. He was made to reprove our thoughts: for his life is not like other mens, his ways are of another fashion. We are esteemed of him as counterfeits, he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness: he pronounceth the end of the just to be blessed, and maketh his boast that God is his father. Let us therefore examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience. Let us see if his words be true: and let us discover what shall happen in the end of him.*" And as real godliness exposes us to shame and reproach, so frequently, to much temporal loss and disadvantage. And, by way of illustrating this point, I shall adduce two cases, proposed by Cicero, when he is laying down rules of honesty between man and man.

1. ANTISTHENES brings a ship load of corn to RHODES, at a time of great scarcity. The RHODIANS flock about him to buy. He knows that five other ships laden with corn will be there to-morrow. Ought he to tell the RHODIANS this, before he sells his own corn? Undoubtedly he ought, says the Roman lawyer. Otherwise he makes a gain of their ignorance, and so is no better than a thief or a robber.

2. A Roman gentleman *sues* a nobleman, for selling him a house without first acquainting him, that others houses were built near it, which darkened the windows. The nobleman pleads in his defence, *I thought he knew it.* The judge asks, *did you tell him or not?* And on his owning, *he did not*, determines, "this is contrary to the law, *ne quid dolo malo fiat*" (let nothing be done fraudulently) and sentences him immediately to pay back part of the price. And thus in many instances, every truly conscientious person, by adhering to that golden rule *whatever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them* must be frequently a considerable loser.

But, lastly, if any man will come after Christ let him deny his PLEASURE. And here I shall not speak of those sensual gratifications which are universally acknowledged to be criminal in a high degree, as adultery, fornication,

uncleanness, lasciviousness, drunkenness, revellings, &c. but of those PLEASURES which have been baptised with the soft appellation of innocent amusements,* and harmless recreations; as card-playing, dancing, theatrical entertainments, &c.; I am sensible, indeed, that to speak, or write against these established modes of killing time and spending money is worse than heresy, and little less than high treason; yet, as I perceive great damage likely to accrue to your spiritual concerns from an indulgence in these vanities, I must, at all events, warn you against them, and thereby deliver my own soul. But possibly you will say, These amusements are no where forbidden in the scriptures, and therefore cannot be criminal. As to Card-playing, it is not above two centuries since it was invented; and you can hardly suppose the inspired writers should be instructed to notice every foolish and trifling amusement which the lovers of pleasure more than God might, in the succession of ages, devise and practise. But, not to mention the waste of time, and other evils incident to this bewitching diversion, I affirm it is a positive breach of the tenth commandment; for all card-players covet or desire to win their neighbour's money; and God enjoins us not to covet or *de-*

* See the Spectator, vol. 2. no. 93.

sire any thing that is our neighbour's. And as to promiscuous dancing,† it is an heathenish invention, and has been reprobated by the best and wisest men in every age. Nothing, says Cornelius Agrippa, can be more ridiculous; it lets loose the reigns of wantonness, is a faithful friend to sin, the great incentive to uncleanness, an enemy to chastity, and a recreation unworthy of rational creatures. And an eminent divine of our own church observes, that "the usual concomitants of this sport are drinking, foolish and frothy talk, and other immodest postures and gestures, so that to plead for it, is to plead for an accumulation of sins and enormities; and though such language is usually branded with the name of foolish preciseness, sure I am, says the above writer, it is agreeable to that wisdom which is from above; and he that means to arrive at this wisdom must of necessity become a fool, a fool in the eyes of the world, and that must be a christian's greatest glory; for know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend

† The dancing, mentioned in the scriptures, and practised by the Jews, was of a religious nature, and performed not to please themselves or the spectators; but to glorify and praise God on account of some remarkable deliverance. Besides the men and women danced apart without mixing one with another.

of the world, is the enemy of God."‡ Nor is this Divine less severe on Theatrical Entertainments. "Is the sight of *a Comedy*, says he, likely to make you more crucified to the world, more devout and heavenly minded? Is your love to God so hot that it needs an extinguisher? Is it so flaming that it wants stolen waters to quench it? Have you not observed it? Have you not taken notice how men and women, who have had some zeal for religion, and very pious inclinations, how their zeal hath decreased upon their frequenting those houses? how their goodness has decayed? how flat they are grown in devotion? how weak in their holy performances? how dull in the work of meditation? how slovenly and superficial in God's service? Consider then what you are doing who plead for these antichristian fooleries, and whether you are not in reality factors for hell.§ And as for read-

‡ What their assemblies for politeness fam'd?
Nurseries of pride, and lewd intrigue, and fraud
In lavish play; base lust of furtive gold.

YOUNG.

§ A modern writer observes, that play-houses are open floodgates to sin. Our comedies, says he, in general, are stuffed not only with vain oaths and impieties, but often with such obscenities as a modest heathen would blush at;------and our tragedies are filled with romantic woe, pride, vain glory, revenge, lust, cruelty, and even self-murder.

ing of modern plays, he that observes what a an aversion from seriousness, and better things, the reading of them causes in the younger sort, will find no great reason to encourage them in such trifles, but rather to discourage them all he can from studies of this nature."§ Again, there can be little hope of the grace of God taking deep root in your hearts while you are withholding from any their legal claims: and remember the honest, sober, industrious poor have a legal claim to your bounty; for whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, cannot in the nature of things expect that God will impart unto him the gift of his own dear Son; and if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? It is absurd to crave mercy at the hands of God while we refuse it to his creatures; and truly the deeper sense we have of our own extreme sinfulness and poverty, the more feelingly we shall be touched with the miseries and wants of others; and the more readily disposed to communicate to their necessities.

§ See a discourse concerning the Day of Judgment, by Anthony Horneck, D. D. late preacher at the Savoy. Printed in the year 1705.

But lastly, every candidate for the kingdom of heaven must deny himself and take up his cross, in regard to that backwardness and indifferency which he will find in his heart to the performance of religious exercises, and especially to secret prayer. One would be holy, says Bishop Hall, but he would not wait too long at the door posts of God's house, nor lose too many hours in the exercise of his stinted devotions. Another would be happy; but he would leap into heaven suddenly, not abiding to think of towing up thither by a thousand degrees of ascent in the rugged and narrow path of duty. The blessings of the Gospel are certainly without money, and without price; and it is by grace *alone* we are saved through faith; but that grace which bringeth salvation teaches us to deny ourselves; to wrestle and fight, and run, and strive for the palm, as though the victory wholly depended upon our own endeavours. And it is necessary to observe that when God is about to work some great deliverence from some particular sin or pressing temptation, that previous to such deliverance, the awakened soul will think he had never been so wicked, or oppressed before; his corruptions are permitted to stir up in him, and he is ready to conclude with David, that God has forgotten to be gracious, and that his mercy is clean gone for ever. But this con-

clusion is erroneous: the Israelites groaned the most sensibly by reason of their Egyptian task-masters and heavy burdens, when the Almighty was about to deliver them from both. Man's extremity is God's opportunity; out of darkness he brings forth light; of unbelief, faith; of pride, humility; of weakness, strength. His design in these spiritual conflicts is to humble thee, and to prove thee; to make thee to know what is in thine heart, that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth more, because of thy shame, when he is pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done. And as you must pray in secret, so with your families: this is a great and important duty, and must on no account whatever be omitted: the cross undoubtedly will under some circumstances, be exceeding heavy; but better to encounter a lion roaring for his prey, or a bear bereaved of her whelps, than that fury, which God has threatened to pour out upon the families that call not upon his name. Nor will it avail to say, you have not the gift of prayer, or you cannot read. God is no critic, and you may as freely pour out your complaints and wishes into his compassionate bosom, as into that of the most intimate and faithful friend. And that your prayers be not hindered, attend to the Apostle's advice; *Lift up holy hands without*

wrath and doubting. Banish envy and hatred from your hearts; dishonesty and injustice from your lives; *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.* Sanctify also the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words: not contenting yourselves with devoting part of the day to God, and the remainder to travelling, paying or receiving visits, &c. but employing the whole of it in works of piety and mercy; in searching the scriptures; in prayer, praise, and meditation; instructing your servants and children in their duty to God and their neighbour; and laying up in store a good stock of spiritual food for the necessities of the ensuing week. Such then are the means which, through the divine aid, you must use in order to ensure your salvation; but still remember they are only the way to the kingdom, and not the cause of your reigning in that kingdom; nor can they, in themselves, either remove the guilt of sin from the conscience, or subdue the power of it in the heart: this honour is reserved for Faith, or rather for him who is the object of faith, even the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth. In him you will find an infinite

sufficiency of merit to atone for all your sins; inexhaustible riches of goodness to supply all your wants; and abundant measures of grace to relieve you under every oppressive burden. In short, as the Apostle intimates, he is made unto us of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Strive therefore, I intreat you, my dear parishioners, in all the means to look to this merciful Lord and Redeemer of fallen man. Realizing views of a crucified Saviour will fill you with the most profound humility and self abasement. Wo is me! says Isaiah, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts. And truly we find, that holy men, the more sanctified they grow, and the further they proceed in holy ways; they have still the meaner opinion of themselves, and find the more necessity of a Saviour. And this is natural; for the more holy they are, the more quick-sighted and searching, and so discerning the more spots to offend their enlightened eyes, find there is no leaning to their own virtue and goodness; but that they must of necessity, betake themselves unto Christ Jesus, and rely only upon his grace and merits; as well for the acceptance of their best services, as for the pardon of their worst

offences. Realizing views of this crucified Saviour will also inflame your minds with the most ardent love to God and your neighbour: the *love* of Christ, says the Apostle, constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for *all*, then were all dead: and that he died for *all*, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. It is a well known adage; "*Love overcomes all things:*" and the moment a guilty hell-deserving rebel feels himself restored to ease and liberty, and that through the death of his much injured and slighted Lord, he cries out,

> Were the whole realm of nature mine,
> That were a present far too small;
> Love so amazing, so divine,
> Demands my soul, my life, my all.

But, as one observes, Religion is the cure of a diseased soul; and none will properly attend to its precepts but those who have felt this disease; who perceive they are sick; sick indeed; sick even unto death. The wages of sin, of even the least sin in thought, word, or deed, is DEATH: DEATH, natural, spiritual, eternal. I pray you think of this, my dear parishioners, and earnestly cry out with the Psalmist, Lighten mine eyes, O Lord, that

I sleep not in DEATH; sleep not in sin; sleep not in formality. Remember the foolish virgins; remember the churches of Laodicea and Sardis. Many shall seek to enter into the kingdom, says the Redeemer, and not be able; therefore STRIVE ye. Beware of pinning your FAITH on other men's sleeves; or judging of religion by other men's PRACTICES. Let the word of God be your rule, and the spirit of God your guide; and, to put the matter out of dispute, never slack, never faint, never give over importuning the Lord, until you all come to that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among you, either for error in religion, or for viciousness of life. So prays,

your sincere well-wisher,

JOHN CROSSE.

VICARAGE,
April 4, 1791.

POSTSCRIPT.

As probably I shall never think it worth my while to notice Mr. Baldwyn again as a writer, shall just observe that the charges brought against me in his last pamphlet are equally false with his former ones. In the first place, I never intimated to Mr. Busfeild, or any one else, the least wish respecting Mr. Baldwyn's dismission from the School; nor, secondly, did I ever write or dictate a single word in the paper called the Looking-Glass; nor, thirdly, do I recollect that I hesitated about paying Mr. Baldwyn the half-guinea; though I must needs say the demand seemed rather ungenerous, as I had permitted Mr. Baldwyn to live *rent-free* in the Vicarage, 'till such time as he could suit himself with a house elsewhere, but as Horace says,

Many, though faultier much themselves, pretend
Their less offending neighbours' faults to mend.